

Business in
the

Community

Ireland

Strategic Plan 2009 to 2011

Business in the Community Ireland - Strategic Plan 2009-2011

The following strategic plan was prepared by the Executive Staff of Business in the Community Ireland, following extensive consultation with the Board, member companies and other experts who actively contributed to a Blue Sky Scenario Session in June 2008 and a Board Strategy Session in September 2008.

This three year Strategic Plan is based on the Logic Model for strategy planning and reporting and corresponding one year action plans for the organisation and individuals have been developed accordingly.

Vision, mission, purpose and values

Business in the Community Ireland's **vision** is to establish Ireland as a leading country for responsible and sustainable business practice.

Since its inception in 2000, the **mission** of Business in the Community Ireland (BITCI) is to harness the power of Irish business to maximise its positive impact on all its stakeholders

Our **purpose** is to inspire, engage, support and challenge companies to continually improve the impact they have on society, specifically in the community, environment, marketplace and workplace.

Our **Values** Statement

We, with passion and visionary leadership, inspire and support individuals, business and organisations to fulfill their potential. We act with integrity, professionalism and collegiality. Enjoying the challenge!

Strategic Objectives

Objective 1 - Membership

To increase the number of major companies committed to integrating responsible and sustainable practices across the company.

Objective 2 – Responsible Business Action

To support and inspire companies to achieve excellence in Workplace, Environment and Community practices and build excellence in Marketplace.

Objective 3 – Business Impact Programmes

To harness the power of the business sector to address social inclusion needs in the areas of Employment and Education

Objective 4 – Marketing and Communications

To enhance the profile and reputation of Business in the Community Ireland as the leading authority on corporate responsibility and sustainable practices

Objective 5 – Operational Excellence

To ensure Business in the Community Ireland is seen as a place of excellence by its stakeholders.

How we will deliver – people and financial resources

People Resources

Business in the Community Ireland has a team of 70 dynamic and committed people. We are committed to encouraging staff development and open opportunity for all, so many of our staff works across two or more project areas.

We have developed an organisational structure based on the four cross cutting areas:

Membership Services – CR Integration and Communication

**Workplace
Excellence**

**Marketplace
Excellence**

**Community
Excellence**

**Environmental
Excellence**

**CR Reporting & Communications
Excellence**

Business Impact Programmes

Employment

Education

Marketing and Communications

Operational Excellence

Financial Resources

We operate on an annual budget of €3.5 million of which €1 million comes from companies and private sector donations; €2.5 million comes from project-based funding from government departments.

Objective One

To increase the number of major companies committed to integrating responsible and sustainable practices across the company.

Membership

As a network of progressive, successful, responsible companies Business in the Community Ireland would not exist without its members. Therefore increasing the value of membership will continue to be at the heart of our operations over the course of the next three year strategy.

The services that we will deliver will help to support and enable companies to be in the vanguard, globally, of leading businesses dedicated to responsible, sustainable business practices.

Our focus on membership is based on the following

1. Membership growth and engagement
 - 100 members by 2012 and deepened engagement
 - Retention 90% on an annual basis
2. Providing strategic corporate responsibility advice and guidance
 - Working with leading members to integrate corporate responsibility across the business
3. Driving standards, benchmarking and reporting
 - Piloting and rolling out a CR Standard for Ireland that will benchmark companies committed to responsible and sustainable business practices
 - Supporting companies to report on CR in most effective way

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| <i>Proposed Outcomes</i> | <i>Key Activities</i> |
|---|---|
| Ireland seen as a leading country in responsible and sustainable business practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish CR Quality Standard and benchmark practices within Ireland |
| Improved business behaviour | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop CR strategy and action plans for all members• Engage business leadership in CR action plans |
| Increase awareness of responsible and sustainable business behaviour and its benefits | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop communications with companies and business media and develop thought leadership on responsible and sustainable business practices and impact. |

Objective 2

To support and inspire companies to achieve excellence in Workplace, Environment and Community practices and build excellence in Marketplace.

Responsible Business Action in the Workplace

To support and challenge businesses to achieve **workplace excellence** in relation to values, diversity, health and well-being and people development by giving employers and their people the tools to drive positive change

As outlined by the FÁS Labour Intelligence Unit, Ireland's future depends on attracting people to work in a high skills, high knowledge economy. Therefore recruiting and retaining talented people is crucial to the future of Irish businesses. Employers increasingly need to make their organisations attractive to potential employees by ensuring their values are clear to prospective employees and that diversity is encouraged. Organisations should aim to develop a world class workplace by embedding an ethos of work-life balance, investing in the health and well-being of their employees and by continually developing their staff.

1. Values
Promoting the examination, articulation and embedding of values of the organisation.
2. Diversity
Particularly in relation to gender, ethnicity, age and people from marginalised groups (former offenders and people who had suffered homelessness). Recognising the value of diversity and creating a culture where inclusion is the norm.
3. Workplace health and well-being
Promoting workplace health as a key business issue for Ireland's employers.
4. Developing people
Encouraging, inspiring and enabling business to make a significant impact on local communities or social issues through the active engagement of their employees.

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| <i>Proposed Outcomes</i> | <i>Key Activities</i> |
|---|--|
| Ireland seen as a leading country to work in due to responsible and sustainable high level of workplace practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of best practice in workplace area through seminars, programmes, SALTS, standards and thought leadership. • Develop a range of guides and tools. • Develop measurement and evaluation. |
| Irish business embracing and articulating the benefits of diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus efforts on gender, ethnicity, age and marginalised groups through communication and Business Impact Programmes |
| Increase awareness of the benefits of employee volunteering in relation to staff retention, morale, talent management and leadership. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strategic partnerships and flagship customised employee supported volunteering programmes. • Demonstrate the significant impact of volunteering through SIBs. Develop measurement and evaluation tools. |

Responsible Business Action in the Environment

To support and challenge businesses to achieve **environmental excellence** through integrating environmentally sustainable business practices into their operations.

There has never been a more challenging time for the environment and for environmental sustainability, both locally and globally. Focus on the environment and environmental issues has been lead by the threat of climate change, the high cost of energy and the decline in natural resources and biodiversity. Man made negative impacts are causing business to rethink traditional models of economic growth independent of environmental and social impacts. Sustainable development and how business must seek to become environmentally and socially sustainable are key issues. Business must meet the challenge of producing products and services which have a positive impact on the environment and society by utilising and benefiting from a long term strategic focus and a cradle to cradle approach.

At present, Business in the Community has 55 companies in membership who employ over 300,000 people. By 2012 we would hope to have 100 companies in membership who will have close to half a million people employed. Therefore we will work with companies and partners to raise awareness, support practices and challenge changes in behaviour in both companies and by their employees.

Proposed Outcomes

Key Activities

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| <p>Irish companies leading the development and implementation of environmentally sustainable practices</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of best practice in environmentally sustainable practices through seminars, and SALTS and thought leadership • Key partnerships developed • Develop a forum on climate change and sustainable development to ensure partnership and a coherent approach |
| <p>Irish business reducing their environmental impacts leading to improved performance and competitiveness</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase business awareness and action on key environmental issues – climate change, biodiversity, waste and water • Advice and guidance on policy, strategy and action • Develop environmental benchmarking • Promote measurement, evaluation and reporting • Develop environmental reduction initiatives for business with a key focus on carbon • Encourage collaborative action |

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More environmentally responsible, informed and empowered citizens

- Support companies to communicate and enable environmentally responsible action and behaviour among stakeholders (employees, customers)
- Develop key partnerships in this arena

Responsible Business Action in the Community

To support and challenge businesses to achieve **community excellence** through using their skills and resources to build strong, vibrant communities.

Everyone wants to live in a strong vibrant community which enables and supports people from diverse backgrounds to fulfill their potential. Ireland's key to becoming a global leader as an attractive location in which to work will require it to be not only attractive for its excellence in business but also a place where talented people wish to live, play and raise families. Business has a major role to play in ensuring that its skills and resources have an impact on local communities and social causes. Engagement with communities and an awareness of the issues they face provides companies with an insight into the hearts and minds of their employees, their customers and other stakeholders. Strategic community involvement aligned with business goals is a fundamental aspect of corporate responsibility.

Proposed Outcomes

Key Activities

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| <p>Irish companies playing their part in creating vibrant and prosperous communities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broker key partnerships between companies and their local community groups. • Develop Flagship projects and programmes customised to meet company goals. • Demonstrate effects of community involvement through Seeing is Believing Tours. • Promote best practice in community involvement practices through seminars, and SALTS and thought leadership • Develop key partnerships with volunteer agencies and government. • Develop measurement and evaluation tools. • Support companies to communicate community involvement activities and impact |
| <p>Community groups partnered and engaged with companies to effect real change</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver capacity-building workshops throughout Ireland • Develop key partnerships with community networks |
| <p>Creating active and empowered citizens through workplace activities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Employer Supported Volunteering programmes in companies • Develop key partnerships to enable effective volunteering. |

Responsible Business Action in the Marketplace

To support and challenge businesses to achieve **marketplace excellence** in relation to their customers and supply chain.

Customer service is crucial to all businesses and the customer will always be King. It will take considerable effort by all companies to ensure Ireland is a leading country with great customer services. To attract and retain major talent the country will have to be a place where people who have many choices as to where to live and raise families will choose Ireland. Customer services play a large role in this.

Supply chain practices will focus on relationships and the same values and practices as both environmental and sustainable reporting becomes embedded and the norm.

Proposed Outcomes

Key Activities

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| Ireland recognising the crucial focus of customer service for the economy | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotion of best practice in customer service through seminars, and SALTS and thought leadership• Develop measurement and evaluation. |
| Irish business embracing and articulating the benefits of supply chain standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotion of best practice in supply chain through seminars, and SALTS and thought leadership |

Responsible Business Action – CR Reporting & Communications

Business strategy is essential for the success of any organisation. For any company to be able to understand the impact that its operations have on a wide range of stakeholders, systematic measurement of non-financial performance is essential. Currently there is no legislation in Ireland and Europe that requires businesses to report and communicate on non-financial performance, but this trend may change. It is important for businesses to understand the business case for measuring, reporting and communicating on their practices.

Since not all businesses will ever be in a position to issue communications on corporate responsibility and currently there is no recognition of good examples of responsible business practice, there is a need to develop a system to award companies that have achieved a significant level of integration of their responsible business practices.

We will support member companies articulate an integrated business strategy that incorporates responsible business practices at its core.

We will support member companies to measure and report on their non-financial performance and to communicate with a wide range of stakeholder audiences

Proposed Outcomes

Key Activities

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| <p>BITCI member companies to become examples of best practice in CR reporting and communications</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacity of member companies on measuring non-financial performance, reporting and communicating on their CR. • Advice and support member companies on their internal and external communications, including use of internationally recognised standards and external assurance of CR reports. |
| <p>Irish business recognised for the excellence of their responsible business practices</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the CR Standard as the leading label of Corporate Responsibility and sustainable practices. • Develop thought leadership in area of corporate responsibility and sustainable business practices • Providing ‘How to Guides’, position papers and the business case for CR. • Advice and support to member companies on how to further integrate responsible business practices into mainstream business practice. <p style="text-align: center;">Support to member companies on strategy planning and CR governance structures</p> |

Objective 3

To harness the power of the business sector to address social inclusion needs in the areas of Employment and Education

Business Impact Programmes on Education and Employability

To build strong communities all our citizens and our new communities must be engaged through education and involved through employment, if they so choose, to fulfill their potential. Our members and the broader business community can make a positive impact through using their skills and resources to support education and to ensure diversity by employing people from marginalised or diverse backgrounds.

It is fundamental that our young people complete post primary education to sustain our high knowledge economy. Business can play a significant role in ensuring that this happens by supporting the government's School Completion Programme and providing support for literacy or other identified skills programmes.

Employment is often the key to integrating people from diverse and marginalised backgrounds into our communities. Helping excluded individuals/groups find sustained employment by engaging business to provide training, work placements and employment opportunities which improve confidence and motivation and reduce perceived barriers to finding a job.

Proposed Outcomes

Key Activities

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| Improved level of school completion at primary and post primary levels. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of best practice in educational engagement by business • Providing coherent and effective programmes to support education. • Develop measurement and evaluation. • Develop thought leadership in area of business in education |
| Reduction in the levels of economic inactivity in marginalised groups Embracing of diversity in business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and provide business and marginalised groups with effective employment programmes. • Develop key partnerships. • Develop measurement and evaluation. • Develop thought leadership in area of social inclusion and marginalised groups. |
| Reduction in levels of economic inactivity in new communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and provide business and new communities with effective employment programmes. |

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Embracing of diversity in business.

- Develop key partnerships.
- Develop measurement and evaluation.
- Develop thought leadership in area of social inclusion and new communities.

Objective 4

To enhance the profile and reputation of Business in the Community Ireland as the leading authority and network on corporate responsibility and sustainable practices

Marketing and Communications

Good communications underpins all our work at Business in the Community Ireland. Externally we wish to convince and encourage 100 major companies to see BITCI as their partner in driving competitive advantage through corporate responsibility and sustainable business practices throughout their organisations.

We wish to demonstrate and communicate to Business that responsible and sustainable business practices will ensure that all Irish businesses can be the most competitive, sustainable, talent driven organisations in the world. Not only does business affect their immediate stakeholders, e.g. employees, customers, investors through their business practices but it affects also the community and the country in which they do business.

Business in the Community Ireland is developing a strong brand underpinned by strong values. The new strategy will be delivered by committed and expert staff. Internal communications will play a key role in the delivery of the strategy.

The Membership Services Team, the Programmes Team and Marketing Communications function will work closely together in the delivery of the new strategy.

Proposed Outcomes

Key Activities

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| Top 100 companies recognise and embrace the benefits of responsible and sustainable business practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing clear coherent communications on the benefits of CR, sustainable practices and BITCI membership. • Promotion of Corporate Responsibility and sustainable business practices in the media. • Demonstrate CR through 'Best Practice Case Studies' |
| Business in the Community Ireland recognised as the leading authority and network on Corporate Responsibility and sustainable business practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of Annual Reports and stakeholder communications • Provide inspiring and engaging events which highlight and demonstrate the progress of business in CR and sustainable development |
| Increase in companies valuing their membership of BITCI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to demonstrate and communicate member |

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| | companies' best practice, community partnerships, profile building, and leadership in CR and sustainable business practices. |
| Increase in BITCI's public profile with other stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Influence government on the importance of acknowledging responsible business practices from a voluntary perspective.• Work with government and other stakeholders to raise awareness on the importance of CR for the competitiveness of the Irish economy.• Influence government in a range of areas including sustainable public procurement, expungement of criminal sentences and tax-efficient charitable donations.• Successful engagement with key partners in government, academia and NGO sectors. |

Objective 5

To ensure Business in the Community Ireland is seen as a place of excellence by its stakeholders.

Operational Excellence

Business in the Community Ireland aims to inspire, encourage and advise companies on meeting their corporate responsibilities, it too must be a leader in corporate responsibility and sustainable development practices.

Through the development and articulation of our shared values, BITCI aims to be a leading edge organisation, committed to excellence and so leading by example.

We will achieve operational excellence through 5 key principles:

- **Customer driven**
Delivering membership satisfaction and providing tangible business benefits.
- **People focused**
Building a team of talented individuals by investing in leadership, innovation, and creativity, making us an employer of choice
- **Partnership values**
Delivering programmes that are robust, effective and respected by community partners, marginalised groups and programme participants and stakeholders.
- **Process and systems focused**
Continually improving efficiencies and benchmarking 'best in class' to advance performance levels
- **Delivering sustainability**
Ensuring financially sustainable and efficient operations and maintaining a healthy reserve.

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| <i>Proposed Outcomes</i> | <i>Key Activities</i> |
|---|--|
| Reputation established as an outstanding responsible and sustainable organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing excellent level of service to our member companies. • Providing clear coherent communications on the work of BITCI its sustainable practices and programmes. • Measuring and reducing BITCI's carbon footprint while becoming a low carbon organisation. • Demonstrate CR through 'Best Practice Case Studies' and through BITCI's Annual CR Report |
| Business in the Community Ireland recognised as an Employer of Choice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the Excellence through People standard and aim to get the Platinum award by 2011. • Develop thought leadership in area of corporate responsibility and sustainable business practices and attract people who have the same values and commitment. |
| Financial sustainability of the organisation maintained | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure value for money in membership and programmes. Increase income from membership and aim to have a surplus of 5% for each programme. |
| Leading edge internal systems embedded throughout organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all knowledge is captured and achievements and activities measured by leading databases and technologies. |

Corporate Governance

Business in the Community Ireland's Board of Directors

Nationally, BITCI is governed by a Board of Directors whose role is to ensure that the charity's role and purpose as outlined in its strategy document and in its establishing memorandum is reflected in its mission and values.

The Board of BITCI advise on the strategic direction of the organisation. The Board is currently chaired by Kieran McGowan. The list of board members and short biographies are available on our website www.bitc.ie.

The role of the board is to:

- Agree priorities for the organisation
- Support and direct the Chief Executive
- Support the Senior Executive Team
- Approve plans and monitor results
- Approve and monitor the organisation's programmes and services
- Champion key themes and social issues
- Promote responsible and sustainable business practices
- Oversee financial integrity of the organisation and ensure effective risk management
- Carry out Board business efficiently

Reporting

Business in the Community Ireland is committed to communicating how its resources have been expended on charitable and sustainable activities. It will seek over the next three years to emulate best in class at all levels within its means. It will report on an annual basis, measuring and targeting challenging goals. It will maintain the highest standards in openness and transparency.